

19. DISTRIBUTION OF *PANGIO GOAENSIS* (TILAK)  
CYPRINIFORMES : COBITIDAE, IN MANIMALA RIVER,  
SOUTHERN KERALA

(With one text-figure)

Loaches of the genus *Pangio* are considered to be good aquarium fishes due to their small size and vivid colour patterns. The range of distribution of *Pangio* is from Indonesia, through Vietnam, to India (Talwar & Jhingran, 1991). According to Easa and Basha (1995), the genus *Pangio* is represented in India by four species viz., *Pangio pangia* (Ham.), *P. longipennis* Menon, *P. goaensis* (Tilak) and *P. bashai* Easa and Shaji.

Tilak (1973) originally described *Pangio* (*Acanthopthalmus*) *goaensis* based on a single specimen collected from Colem river Goa. This species is commonly known as the Indian coolie-loach. Subsequently Rema Devi *et al.* (1996) reported this species from Chaliyar river, northern Kerala. Thus *Pangio goaensis* is so far known only from Goa and northern Kerala (north of the Palghat gap). According to Rema Devi (pers. comm.) this species is similar to *Pangio bashai* from Chaliyar river.

Recently 12 specimens (31 to 33 mm in total length) of this species were collected by us from Manimala river of southern Kerala (south of the Palghat gap). Specimens were collected from Mallapally (8 specimens) and Kottangal (4 specimens) areas of Pathanamthitta dist. Detritus, mud, sand and gravel are the main substrates in the collection sites, of which sand constituted about 65% of the total. Land use pattern is mainly rubber plantations with

settlements.

*Pangio goaensis* can be easily distinguished from other species by its elongated and fairly compressed body and head. The dorsal fin is inserted in the posterior half of the body, between the pelvic and anal fins. Caudal fin truncate. Scales are very minute and are embedded in the skin: lateral line is absent. Three dark bands run from the tip to the base of the caudal fin, one is on the mid-dorsal line and the other two are on the sides of the body. The two outer bands end in a blotch at the base of the caudal fin. The median band is wider and darker than the others (Fig. 1).

The present record of this species from Manimala river is the first report from southern Kerala, extending its range of distribution to southern Kerala.

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Fig. 1: Lateral view of *Pangio goaensis* (Tilak)

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20. RECORD OF THE BARB *BARBODUS CARNATICUS*  
(CYPRINIDAE : CYPRINIFORMES) FROM THE STREAMS  
OF EASTERN GHATS, OF TAMIL NADU.

The large barb *Barbodus carnaticus* is endemic to Western Ghats, being known only from the Cauvery drainages at the base of the Nilgiris, Wynaad and also from Karnataka (Talwar and Jhingran, 1991; Menon, 1992; Arunachalam *et al.*, 1998). It grows to a maximum size of about 60 cm in length and 12 kg in weight (Menon, 1992); in our ongoing Western Ghats biodiversity programme we recorded specimens from 25 cm to 40 cm in length (0.5-3 kg in weight). During a recent survey, we collected a fair number of specimens of *B. carnaticus* from an unnamed stream near Arapaleeswar temple, and also some unnamed streams in Kolli hills of Eastern Ghats, Tamil Nadu. The literature on Eastern Ghats (Talwar and Jhingran, 1991; Misra, 1938; Lazarus *et al.*, 1988; Rema Devi, 1992) shows that this species was not reported from this region by earlier workers. Till now, the distribution of the species was Cauvery drainage systems of Western Ghats (Molur and Walker, 1998). The present record shows its extension to Eastern Ghats, indicating affinities between Western Ghats and Eastern Ghats of Tamil Nadu.

## DESCRIPTION

D IV/8; P 15; V 9; A II/5; C 19; Ltr. Scales 5, 3 ½. Body elongate, dorsal profile more

convex than ventral; its depth 2.8 to 3.2 times in standard length. Head length 4.0 to 4.25 times in head. Mouth subterminal; lips moderately fleshy. Barbels two pairs, maxillary pair longer than rostral pair. Dorsal fin inserted midway between tip of snout and caudal base. Last undivided dorsal ray osseous, strong. Lateral line complete with 30-32 scales. Colour in live specimens dark olivaceous green on back, fading to dull white with gold on flanks and abdomen. After preservation in formaline, light brown on dorsal side and flanks, abdomen pale yellow.

**Habitat and Ecology**

*B. carnaticus* prefers large pools and riffle habitats of rapid rivers and streams. Adults prefer pools, hiding in undercutting of bedrock and boulders, while juveniles prefer riffle habitats. It feeds mostly on benthic substrates. It has been introduced into reservoirs of Periyar and Cauvery drainage systems.

**Distribution**

Found in Cauvery, Bhavani, Moyar rivers in Tamil Nadu; Periyar reservoir (introduced) in Kerala (Menon, 1992) and Hemavathi river of Karnataka (Arunachalam *et al.*, 1998). We collected this species for the first time from an unnamed stream near Arapaleeswar temple in Kolli hills of Eastern Ghats, Tamil Nadu.